

# Outstanding Volunteers Honored: Our 1999 Volunteer Award Winners



BLM Director Tom Fry (left) with Winners of the Bureau of Land Management's "Making a Difference" 2000 Volunteer Award Ceremony held Thursday, May 11, 2000, at the Department of the Interior in Washington, DC. From left to right: BLM Director Tom Fry; volunteer winner Sherry Hayes (sitting); volunteer winners Ed Walheim, Bill Cook, and Amy Craig; and BLM winner David Erickson. Standing in front of him is volunteer winner Barbara Robb; then Willie Robb; BLM winner Doug Huntington; and volunteer winner Davis Farrar, representing the Red Hill Council. Not pictured are representatives of the Friends of the Mustangs group from Colorado and Shirley Craig (mother of Amy Craig), also a winner, who was not able to attend due to an injury. Photo by Tami Heilemann, DOI.

## SPECIAL PEOPLE "MAKING A DIFFERENCE!"

Seven outstanding BLM volunteers, two volunteer groups, and two exceptional BLM employees were recognized May 11, 2000, in BLM's "Making a Difference" national volunteer awards ceremony held at the renovated South Penthouse/Terrace of the Main Interior Building in Washington, DC. The awards were presented for outstanding service in 1999.

Since 1995, BLM has awarded the "Making a Difference" national level award to our exceptionally dedicated volunteers. These special people represent the best national examples of volunteer work on the public lands. And, they represent only a small fraction of the exceptional contributions that are made every day by thousands of people on public lands throughout the country.

A national panel of BLM and partner representatives selected the winners

from nominations submitted by all 12 BLM State Offices and the National Interagency Fire Center. The winners were selected for their exceptional contributions in making a difference in the management of the public lands, rather than for length of service or number of hours contributed. Collectively, these 11 winners represent eight BLM field offices in five western states.

## VOLUNTEERS

### **Bill Cook**

Bill Cook of Yermo, California, patrols two popular canyons in the Calico Mountains outside of BLM's Barstow Field Office, not once but TWICE each day. Bill not only picks up trash, he takes the time to talk to 95 percent of the visitors. His presence deters vandalism and inspires a conservation ethic among the public land users, many of whom pitch in and help when they see him working to clean up the public lands. Bill's daily routine started as a follow-up to a National Public Lands Day event where volunteers removed more than six tons of trash from the area in one day. When Bill offered to provide lunch for the event, little did he know he would be feeding 500 hungry volunteers. Bill also once helped rescue a teenager who had fallen into an abandoned mine in the area. Bill's presence on and care for

the land sets a very high standard for volunteerism in BLM.

### **Shirley and Amy Craig**

For 11 years, the Craigs of St. George, Utah, worked for the BLM's Arizona Strip Field Office. For five years, George and Shirley Craig documented ancient rock art in the Little Black Mountain Rock Art Site, working evenings and weekends. Their daughter Amy joined them in 1993, and they began to share their expertise in rock art research with others, presenting papers and representing the BLM in Arizona, Nevada, Utah, and California. In January 1993, they were named Regional Site Steward Coordinators and began conducting training and field trips for other site stewards. In 1995, they received the Regional Coordinator of the Year Award from the State of Arizona. George Craig passed away in 1996, but his memory lives on as Shirley and Amy continue the work that he had been so much a part of. In addition to coordinating the site steward program, Shirley and Amy have continued their own rock art research and have recruited additional volunteers to assist.

### **Sherry Hayes**

Sherry Hayes, of Bisbee, Arizona, is recognized for her significant contributions to the beautiful San Pedro National Conservation Area, the most

important riparian complex in the Sonoran Desert. As a member of the "Friends of the San Pedro River," she donated over 600 hours last year alone doing just about everything from marketing to bird banding. The mission of the Friends group is to support the BLM in its stewardship of the Conservation Area, located south of Tucson. Sherry did this in many ways. For example, she designed several computer database programs to track volunteer hours, purchase orders, and even bird locations. In addition, she redesigned the newsletter and started a web page for the area. Both indoors at the computer and outdoors on the land, Shirley has proven that one person can "make a difference."

#### **Willie and Barbara Robb**

Willie and Barbara Robb of Twentynine Palms, California, donated over 1,600 hours (the equivalent of 10 months) of their time to welcome visitors to the public lands near Twentynine Palms. They manage and staff an official BLM Visitor Information Outpost, saving the BLM well over \$30,000 per year. They play a key role in representing the BLM at the only public contact station within the community of about 90,000 people. In addition to selling maps, distributing free information, and answering myriad questions, the Robbs also promote goodwill within the community. Representing BLM at the local Earth

Day event sponsored each year by the U.S. Marine Corps, they reach more than 7,000 community members and tourists, many of whom have never heard of the BLM. Their dedication is evident by the fact that they also take on labor intensive jobs such as facility and road maintenance in their so called "spare" time.

#### **Ed Waldheim**

Ed Waldheim, of Glendale, California, has volunteered for nine years in the BLM's Ridgecrest Field Office promoting wise off-highway vehicle (OHV) use on the public lands in southern California. As leader of BLM's "Friends of Jawbone" volunteers, he supervises staffing of the Jawbone Visitor Station and conducts weekend volunteer events. He also set up "Smitty's Volunteers." This group of 35 OHV volunteers worked 14 weekends in 1999 in support of a six-year project to designate a 126-mile vehicle route across 63,000 acres in the Rand Mountains. The route will keep OHV users off sensitive habitat areas.

Another group established by Ed in 1999 assists BLM in implementing a 286-mile vehicle route system in the Jawbone-Butterbrecht Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). These volunteers are restoring areas damaged by OHVs and are educating public land users in order to improve compliance with OHV rules. Ed also

spearheaded a project to map OHV routes and obtained a \$19,000 grant to distribute maps to users. Ed has been instrumental in obtaining additional grants to support various projects of the Ridgecrest Field Office.

## **VOLUNTEER GROUPS**

### **Friends of the Mustangs**

Judy Cady, President

Patsy Davis

Beverly Madaris

Debbie Welsh

For over 17 years, the Friends of the Mustangs group has been a major partner in the management of BLM's Little Book Cliffs Wild Horse Area just north of Grand Junction, Colorado. They have donated thousands of hours and are a key player in the success of the wild horse program in Grand Junction. This year, they worked 2,540 hours at a savings to BLM of over \$20,000. Members work hand in hand with BLM employees in all phases of the wild horse program, with an emphasis on management of the horse range. They inspect and repair springs, fences, and trails, and assist with range studies, horse monitoring, preadoption inspections, and adopted horse compliance. They also promote the wild horse program in parades, fairs, conventions, schools, and horse shows. In short, they have become part of the

solution in managing wild horses on the public lands, and set an excellent example for other volunteer groups.

### **Red Hill Council**

The Red Hill Council, represented by Davis Farrar, is a grass-roots group of volunteers, neighbors, and community partners who came together to help BLM preserve the recreation and aesthetic values of the Red Hills area in central Colorado. Over the past two years, the Council has facilitated public discussion, conducted biological and cultural assessments, and coordinated volunteer work to improve this area which has become an increasingly popular recreation site for residents of the Roaring Fork Valley near Glenwood Springs. In addition, the Council has leveraged \$80,000 in direct and in-kind contributions from community partners to support the management goals of the area. They have set high standards for community partnerships while working for our public lands.

## **BLM EMPLOYEES**

### **David Erickson**

David Erickson, Outdoor Recreation Planner, has greatly expanded the volunteer program in BLM's Roseburg District Office in Oregon by recruiting volunteers to serve in a variety of roles, accomplishing work conservatively valued

at \$200,000. He recruited campground hosts for seven recreation sites in the BLM's Swiftwater Resource Area, who together contributed over 15,000 hours in volunteer service in 1999. Dave scheduled inmate crews, who worked 1,200 hours to construct and repair trails, stabilize streambanks, clear hazardous tree debris, and install drains. He also has coordinated Boy Scout projects and Job Corps assignments. In planning and supervising this work, Dave keeps community interests in mind and has gone out of his way to design trails that are accessible to the physically challenged. Dave is well respected as a leader and as one who can get things done.

### **Doug Huntington**

Doug Huntington has provided outstanding leadership to the volunteer program in BLM's Eugene District in Oregon for many years. In 1999, his active involvement resulted in 277

volunteers contributing more than 35,000 hours of service to our public lands. Dave takes a "hands on" approach, guiding, training, and supervising volunteers, and carefully matching those with unique talents to special jobs. He also leads a special KidsArt program, which gives students an opportunity to create art with environmental themes. Students mentor local artists and display their pieces at an exciting "gallery opening" held at the Eugene District Office. Doug coordinates Eagle Scout and other service projects, and manages several large volunteer events each year, including National Trails Day, National Public Lands Day, and Good Neighbor Day. Without his dedication, many people would miss out on the satisfaction of "making a difference" for their public lands, and BLM would miss out on many outstanding opportunities as well.